



Campfire Restrictions Renewed in Ansel Adams and John Muir Wilderness Areas

Inyo National Forest Supervisor Jim Upchurch and Sierra National Forest Supervisor Scott Armentrout have signed Forest Orders to renew restrictions on the use of campfires in the Ansel Adams and John Muir Wilderness Areas. The decisions were based on the 2001 Wilderness Management Plan for these areas and the need to protect natural resources and wilderness values.

Due to the fact that circumstances have not changed, and there is a need to prevent the further depletion of downed wood and ground litter which are essential to ecosystem processes in alpine environments, the need for the restrictions continues.

The reaffirmed restrictions include:

- No campfires within the Ansel Adams and John Muir Wilderness Areas above 10,000 ft. in elevation, north of Piute Pass.
- No campfires within the John Muir Wilderness above 10,400 ft. in elevation, south of Piute Pass.

After reviewing an analysis of the availability of firewood conducted in 2009, Supervisors Armentrout and Upchurch decided there was a need to prohibit campfires in a number of additional lower elevation areas where firewood is depleted. The areas are located at elevations lower than the portions of the wilderness with elevation-based campfire restrictions, and are displayed on maps in the Forest Orders.

Persons with a valid Wilderness Permit or California Campfire Permit are **not exempt** from the prohibitions but are allowed to use portable stoves or lanterns using gas, jellied petroleum, or pressurized liquid fuel in areas where restrictions are in affect.

The John Muir and Ansel Adams Wildernesses have prohibited campfires in specific areas since 1996. The prohibitions were instituted because firewood from dead and downed trees had been largely depleted in certain areas. The elevation-based campfire restrictions have been in place every year since 2002. The purpose of the elevational restrictions is to prevent further depletion of downed wood in the alpine whitebark pine forest. Downed wood is essential to ecosystem processes and forest health in whitebark pine forests where the trees have a very slow rate of growth and rely on decomposing wood for nutrient cycling and soil development.

Visitors planning a trip to either the Ansel Adams or John Muir Wilderness should contact a Sierra or Inyo National Forest office or visitor center or go online to the Inyo or Sierra National Forest websites at: www.fs.usda.gov/inyo, or www.fs.fed.us/r5/sierra to obtain maps and information regarding the campfire restrictions.

For more information, please call Jeff Marsolais at 760-873-2515 or Teri Drivas at 559-297-0706 ext 4923.